

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application, in light of the present amendments and following discussion, is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-10 are pending. Claims 1 and 2 are amended. Claims 3-10 are newly added. Support for the amendments to Claims 1 and 2 can be found in numbered paragraphs [0027] and [0032] of the published application and is otherwise self-evident. Support for newly added Claims 3 and 4 can be found in numbered paragraph [0023] of the published application, for example. Support for new added Claims 5 and 6 can be found in numbered paragraph [0038] and Figs. 7 and 8, for example. Support for newly added Claims 7 and 8 can be found in numbered paragraphs [0028], [0030], and [0038], for example. Support for newly added Claims 9 and 10 can be found in Figs. 1 and 2 and numbered paragraph [0040], for example. No new matter is added.

In the outstanding Office Action, Claims 1 and 2 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as indefinite. Claims 1 and 2 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as obvious over Suzuki et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,047,435, herein "Suzuki"). Claims 1 and 2 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as obvious over Policicchio (U.S. Patent No. 6,996,871, herein "Policicchio"). Claim 1 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as obvious over Japanese Patent No. 3,027,381, (herein "JP '381").

At the outset, Applicants note with appreciation the courtesy of a personal interview granted to Applicants' representative by Examiner Shay Lynn Karls. The substance of the personal interview, in conjunction with the Interview Summary provided by Examiner Karls, is summarized below in accordance with MPEP § 713.04.

Regarding the rejection of Claims 1 and 2 as indefinite, the sections noted in the outstanding Office Action as lacking antecedent basis have been amended in independent

Claim 1 to address the antecedent basis issue. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that the rejection of Claims 1 and 2 as indefinite is overcome.

Regarding the rejection of Claims 1 and 2 as obvious over Suzuki, the rejection of Claims 1 and 2 as obvious over Policicchio, and the rejection of Claim 1 as obvious over JP '381, those rejections are respectfully traversed by the present response.

Amended independent Claim 1 recites, in part:

the projecting part being adapted to stick out of the edge of the head by a projecting length M when the cleaning sheet is attached to the head, and the projecting part having a repulsive force of 0.1 to 100 N/cm when deformed by a length M/3 in the direction opposite the projecting direction thereof.

Accordingly, amended independent Claim 1 recites a specific repulsive force occurring when the projecting part is deformed by one-third of its length in a direction opposite the direction in which the projecting part extends.

The outstanding Office Action acknowledges that Suzuki, Policicchio, and JP '381 each fail to teach that the elements cited in the outstanding Office Action for the feature of a projecting part have a repulsive force as recited in amended independent Claim 1.¹ The outstanding Office Action asserts that it would have been obvious, at the time the claimed invention was made, to modify any of Suzuki, Policicchio and JP '381 so that the parts of these references cited in the outstanding Office Action for the feature of projecting parts would have a repulsive force within the claimed range.

As discussed in the personal interview, none of Suzuki, Policicchio, and JP '381 recognizes the repulsive force of a projecting part as a result-effective variable.

MPEP § 2144.05(ii)(B) states:

A particular parameter **must first be recognized as a result-effective variable**, i.e., a variable which achieves a recognized result, before the determination of the optimum or workable ranges of said variable might be characterized as

¹ Outstanding Office Action, pages 3-5

routine experimentation. *In re Antonie*, 559 F.2d 618, 195 USPQ 6 (CCPA 1977).

None of Suzuki, Policicchio, and JP '381 teach or suggest that the repulsive force of the projecting part is a result-effective variable. Accordingly, it would not have been obvious, at the time the claimed invention was made, to optimize the repulsive force of the components cited in the outstanding Office Action for the feature of projecting parts to include the repulsive force ranging from 0.1 to 100 N/cm as recited in amended independent Claim 1.

However, the Examiner also asserted in the personal interview that Suzuki, Policicchio, and JP '381 would inherently have a repulsive force of the projecting parts within the range claimed in amended independent Claim 1 inasmuch as the claimed range would necessarily encompass a repulsive force present in all functional cleaning sheets.

Applicants respectfully submit that, for a characteristic to be inherent, it must necessarily be present in all embodiments of a particular device, and a mere probability that this characteristic will be present in a given device is not sufficient. Applicants respectfully submit that as Suzuki, Policicchio, and JP '381 are silent with regard to the repulsive force ranging from 0.1 to 100 N/cm as recited in amended independent Claim 1, and no other evidence is present in the record indicating that any of Suzuki, Policicchio, and JP '381 would necessarily require the recited repulsive force, this characteristic has not been established as an inherent characteristic. Therefore, independent Claim 1 patentably distinguishes over the cited references.

Additionally, the projection (3) of Suzuki is formed by cutting one or two sheets of non-woven fabric to have a chevron or serrated form. The projection portion (2) of JP '381 is an uneven portion of the cleaning sheet (1), which is formed from materials such as pulp and polyester to have a desired thickness. The projected portions formed of these sheet materials would not have substantial elasticity.

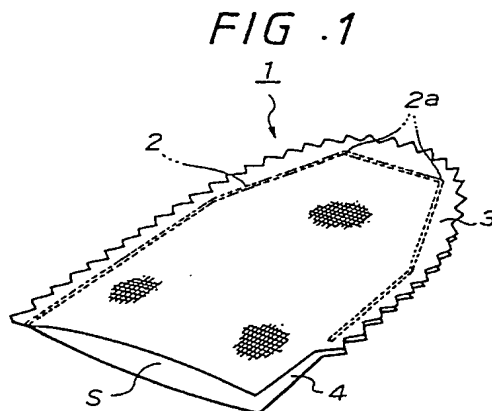
The functional cuff (207) of Policicchio is made by looping a non-woven fabric sheet and is fixed so as to move forward and backward. Since the functional cuff (20) does not elastically function with the attached portion, it would not have substantial elasticity.

DEPENDENT CLAIMS ARE FURTHER DISTINGUISHED

Newly added dependent Claim 7 recites a second wiping sheet disposed on a side of the base sheet opposite the first wiping sheet. Accordingly, there are two wiping sheets, and one is disposed on a side of the base sheet opposite the other.

Neither of Suzuki and Policicchio teaches or suggests a second wiping sheet disposed on a side of a base sheet opposite a first wiping sheet.

In the discussion of Claim 2, the outstanding Office Action relies on the top sheet shown in Fig. 1 of Suzuki for the base sheet.² However Suzuki fails to teach or suggest a base sheet in addition to first and second wiping sheets as recited in newly added dependent Claim 7. Fig. 1 shown below makes clear that Suzuki merely describes a hollow cleaning cloth (1).



If the top sheet qualifies as a base sheet as asserted in the outstanding Office Action, then Suzuki does not include a second wiping sheet. If the top sheet qualifies as a second wiping sheet, then Suzuki does not disclose a base sheet.

² Outstanding Office Action, page 3.

Policicchio describes a cleaning pad with a backing (403), not described in Policicchio's specification, supporting a scrubbing layer (401). The outstanding Office Action relies on the backing (403) for the feature of a base sheet. However, as shown in Fig. 12 below, Policicchio does not provide a second scrubbing layer (401) on an opposite side of the backing (403).

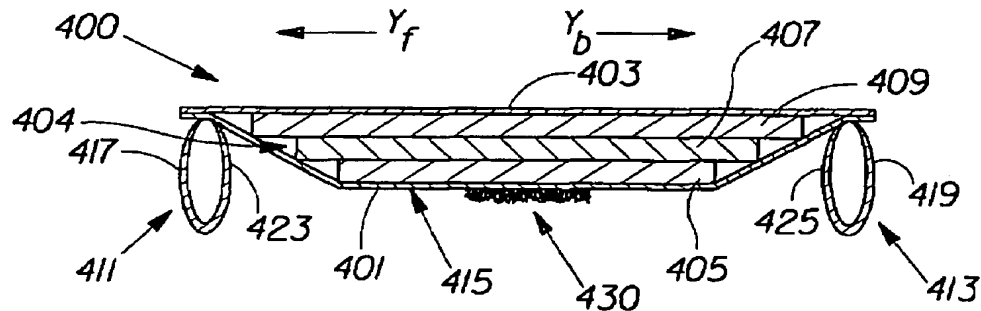


Fig. 12

The backing (403) is left uncovered to allow attachment to a head of a handle. Accordingly, Policicchio fails to teach or suggest all of the features recited in newly added dependent Claim 7.

The outstanding Office Action has not asserted that JP '381 describes a base sheet, and Applicants respectfully submit that JP '381 does not describe a base sheet, much less a second wiping sheet disposed on a side of a base sheet opposite a first wiping sheet.

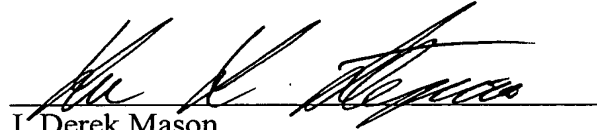
Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that newly added dependent Claim 7 patentably distinguishes over all of the cited references for at least the above-noted reasons.

Newly added dependent Claims 8-10 recite further features related to the feature discussed above regarding newly added dependent Claim 7, and newly added dependent Claims 8-10 patentably distinguish over any of the cited references for their own features, in addition to distinguishing by virtue of their dependency from newly added dependent Claim 7.

Consequently, in light of the above discussion and in view of the present amendment, the present application is believed to be in condition for allowance. An early and favorable action to that effect is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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